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sources and that the origin of revealed ideas is more generally subjective than objective.

Our conclusion regarding the objective character of "angelic" revelation incidentally throws light upon the larger subject of Old Testament angelology or at least upon that department of it in which angels are treated as the bearers or messengers of revelation. Striking phenomena in critical situations which are spiritually significant of the will of God become the peculiar *terrain* of an angel. Thus natural phenomenal functioning in the interest of divine purposes for man is designated by a method of personification as angel. An angel then may be properly defined as just this, namely, some phenomenal aspect of nature which functions to manifest the particular will of God. For example, "the chariots of God are thousands of angels," or "making winds his angels, a burning fire his servants."<sup>1</sup>

Quite contrary then to the ordinary understanding angels are in essence not noumenal but phenomenal beings. While, on the other hand, that which is essentially noumenal and spiritual is connoted by the expression "the word of the Lord."

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## A STUDY OF רָעַם

### I

While all authorities agree that רָעַם means *thunder* most of them render רָעַמָּה *mane* and almost all are unanimous in admitting that the origin of the latter word is unknown or at least uncertain.

In רָעַמָּה צִנְאָרוֹ הַתְּלִבִּישׁ (Job 39:19) the Peshitta renders רָעַמָּה by צִנְאָר, thus differing from all other translations by taking רָעַמָּה as *armor*. A.V. simply translates "Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder" (!) while R.V. changes *thunder* to *quivering mane*.<sup>2</sup> The LXX ἐνέδυσας δὲ τραχήλῳ αὐτοῦ φόβον seems to render רָעַמָּה *terror* (from ὁ φόβος) though a lexicon<sup>3</sup> has (under רָעַמָּה) "φοβῆ=mane."

Coming, however, to the latest lexicons we are confronted by the fact that all of them agree that רָעַמָּה is *mane* although *none supplies any satisfactory proof*. Gesenius-B.D.B.<sup>4</sup> renders רָעַמָּה "*vibration? quivering mane?*" (both with queries) and adds that the meaning is "very uncertain." Gesenius-Buhl<sup>5</sup> tells us: "רָעַמָּה ist ein *unsicheres Wort*, meistens m: Mähne

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 68:17; 104:4.

<sup>2</sup> R.V. margin reads: Heb. "Shaking."

<sup>3</sup> Ges.-Tregelles s.v.

<sup>4</sup> Oxford Heb. Lexicon, 1906 s.v.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. u. Aram. Handwörterbuch, 1915.

übersetzt . . . ." and "Zittern . . . die einzig gesicherte Bed. Lärmen, Toben passt hier nicht." König<sup>1</sup> disagrees with this last remark and renders the word "Dröhnen . . . meton. Beben, Geschüttele st. seines Subjekts: flatternde Mähne." "Diese Bedeutung," he adds, "ist also metonymisch ableitbar u. deshalb ist 'Dröhnen, Toben' nicht 'die einzig gesicherte Bedeutung' (as Gesenius-Buhl asserts) zu nennen." Siegfried and Stade<sup>2</sup> translate: "Das Zittern, Gezitter," and Job 39:19 is rendered "bekleidest du seinen Hals mit Gezitter" with the explanation "gewöhnlich als poet. Beschreibung der Pferde-mähne, v. andern auf die zitternden Bewegungen des Halses gedeutet."

But our difficulty does not end with רעם. Can the noun רעם or the verb רעם always mean *thunder*? Take for instance ψ 80(81):7(8)

אֶעֱנֶה בְּסֵתֶר רַעַם

A.V. and R.V., "I answered thee in the secret place of thunder." LXX *ἐν ἀποκρύφῳ κατακρύβος*. What does *the secret place of thunder* mean? Duhm explains, "In the cloud which hides the thunder and at the same time veils God from sight (Job 22:18)." "This is no doubt a worthy explanation," remarks the writer on "thunder" in the *E.B.*,<sup>3</sup> but the Hebrew phrase does not appear to suit the parallelism."

Such a sentence as יִרְעַם הַיָּם וּבְלִיאָן (ψ 96:11; 98:7; I Chron. 16:32) cannot simply mean as A.V. translates "Let the sea roar." Gesenius sees the difficulty and explains it thus: "Let the sea thunder (in praise, *שמחה*, etc.)." But is it really natural to say *thunder in praise*? And, further, how is רעם logically or philologically connected with *שמחה*, גִּיל, עֵלֶז? The LXX in I Chron. 16:32 *βομβήσαι*, in ψ 96(95):11 and 98(97):7 *σαλευθήτω*, etc., does not carry us much farther.

A similarly difficult expression, if רעם="thunder," meets us in Job 26:14: יִרְעַם גְּבוּרָתוֹ. A.V., "but the thunder of his power"; R.V. margin, "the thunder of his mighty deeds." But "the thunder of one's power" is an unheard-of expression and the "thunder of one's mighty deeds" is almost equally strange. Again II Sam. 22:14:

(a) יִרְעַם מִן שָׁמַיִם ה'  
(b) וְעָלִיז יִתֵּן קוֹלוֹ

If (a)="the Lord *thundereth* from heaven, *ἐβρόντησεν ἐξ οὐρανόυ κύριος*" (II Kings 22:14), then (b) is a repetition of (a) since the usual words for thunder are קוֹל ה'.

<sup>1</sup> *Heb. u. Aram. Wörterbuch zum A.T.*, 1910.

<sup>2</sup> *Heb. Wörterbuch zum A.T.*, 1873.

<sup>3</sup> P. 5064.

<sup>4</sup> *Thunder* is much more frequently קוֹל ה' (*E.B.*, p. 5064).

יִרְעַם בְּקוֹל גְּאוֹנוֹ (Job 37:4) would also have to be rendered "He thundereth with the thunder," etc. A.V., "He thundereth with the voice of his excellency," R.V., "He thundereth with the voice of his majesty," are better English but do not present a very elegant picture. Imagine: He in his majesty, or excellency, standing *with open mouth making a noise* which turns into thunder!

רַעַם שָׂרִים וְתַרוּעָה (Job 39:25) is one of the most difficult phrases. The A.V. and R.V. rendering "the thunder of captains and shouting" has no support in the LXX which has here quite a different reading, σὺν ἄλματι καὶ κρουγῇ.

שִׁעָרָם שִׁעָרָם רַעֲבָנָם (Ezek. 27:35) is rendered by A.V., "They shall be troubled in their countenance," which R.V. accepts but changes "shall be" to "are" troubled. Both differ from LXX καὶ ἐδάκρυσε τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ and neither gives a translation suitable to רַעֲבָנָם either in point of etymology or place in context.

## II

It is true that some of the last-mentioned difficulties can be explained away in one way or other; but *taking them together* one is forced to admit, particularly when one considers a sentence like אֶעֱנֶךָ בַּסֵּתֵר רַעַם ("I will answer thee in the secret place of thunder"), that some better explanation is required. I propose to show that רַעַם had originally a meaning quite different from "thunder" and that this last signification is only a later development of its original meaning. My argument is not a *reductio ad absurdum*, based only on the difficulties mentioned above. It is founded on quite independent and, I venture to think, irrefutable evidence.

## III

As is well known, the Peshitta or Syriac version of the O.T. is not the work of one translator. While it no doubt contains some late renderings influenced by the LXX it contains also a number of very ancient passages which have their origin in an age when the translators could not possibly have been subjected to the influence of the Greek translations. The Peshitta is generally called the Queen of Versions and no doubt, as Professor Margolis says,<sup>1</sup> was made *from the Hebrew* with the assistance of Jews, combining with *fidelity to the original* elegance of style and embodying elements of interpretation *rooted in Jewish tradition*.<sup>2</sup> According to Dr. Driver<sup>3</sup> the Syriac version dates "*in the main* from the early part of the second century A.D." But "the Peshitta is not the work of a single hand"<sup>4</sup> and, as I said before,

<sup>1</sup> Max L. Margolis, *The Story of Bible Translations* (1917), pp. 44 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. H. Graetz, *Monatsschrift für Geschichte u. Wissenschaft des Judenthums* (1878), p. 486, and T. H. Weir, *Heb. Text of O.T.* (1899), p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> S. R. Driver, *Notes on Samuel* (1913), p. li.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. li-iii.

contains elements of a very ancient date. I maintain that these elements have preserved for us many an *ancient signification* which has been forgotten in later times when the word it represents assumed or developed a different meaning. There can be no doubt that those ancient Syriac translators knew their Hebrew much better than any of the other Bible translators, and, since they translated direct from the Hebrew, their work is of inestimable value to the Bible student. Had we been able to say with certainty of every passage in the Peshitta, this is, or is not, the work of the first translators, we should certainly always have followed those ancient renderings in preference to any others. Those ancients were nearer the fountain-head of the Hebrew language and their waters must, therefore, have been the purest.

## IV

Now, out of *thirteen verbal* and *six* (or seven if רַעֲמָה is included) *noun* forms of רַעַם that occur in the O.T. the Peshitta renders at least two of them by a verb and a noun of the root of מַגַּל ("glory").

"In the secret place of thunder" (בְּסֻתְרֵי רַעַם) ψ 80(81):7(8) is, "In the secret place of *glory*" = מַגַּל, and יִרְעַם הַיָּם, I Chron. 16:32 (A.V. and R.V., "Let the sea roar"; LXX, βομβήσῃ ἡ θάλασσα), is in the Peshitta: "Let the sea *glory*" (or glorify) = מַגַּל.

A third place may be added, viz., ψ 96:11, where the rendering is, "Let the sea *exult*" (or *rejoice greatly*) = נִגַּח, which may have quite a logical connection with *glory*.

These renderings must have come down from a very ancient date and having been incorporated in the complete text of the Peshitta have preserved for us a signification of רַעַם which was anterior to that of "thunder." It will soon be shown how this Syriac rendering removes many a difficulty from many a meaningless verse in the O.T. and throws a clear light on many another. But let me first indicate how רַעַם has developed.

## V

a) Originally רַעַם meant *glory*,<sup>1</sup> as the two or three renderings preserved from antiquity in the Peshitta, just quoted, clearly show.

b) To the ancient Hebrews thunder had a special sanctity as the expression of the divine omnipotence.<sup>2</sup> Being the "most sublime of natural phenomena" it is represented by a poetical echo of primitive myth as the voice of God.<sup>3</sup> "Psalm 24 is throughout a sublime poetic description of a thunderstorm and its effects, though the name רַעַם does not once occur in it, but only the often repeated phrase קוֹל ה'."<sup>4</sup> No wonder, therefore, that

<sup>1</sup> Glory in a transitive sense would of course = praise.

<sup>2</sup> E.B., p. 5064.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> James Patrick, *Hastings' Dic. of the Bible*, p. 757.

the word רָעַם which = *glory* was applied to this "most sublime of natural phenomena" and the "poetically and popularly regarded voice of God," viz., *thunder*.

c) Once רָעַם assumed the signification of "thunder" it naturally developed the meaning of *motion, trembling*, preserved in the Syriac נִסַּס (ψ 98:7) and סַחַח (Job 39:25).

d) From *trembling* to *agitation, perturbation of mind, grieving* is only a small step, and this last development has been preserved in I Sam. 1:6, בַּעֲבוּר הָרָעִימָהּ, which is rendered by the Syriac: "in order to grieve her," almost the same as A.V. and R.V. "for to make her fret."

## VI

All passages in M.T. in which רָעַם occurs either in a verbal or in a noun form can be conveniently classified under one or other of these four groups according as they would bear the signification of (a) *glory*, (b) *thunder*, (c) *motion or trembling*, and (d) *agitation, perturbation, or grieving*.

To Class (a) may belong the following:

(I Chron. 16:32; ψ 96:11; 98:7) יִרְעֶם הַיָּם = Let the sea glory (or praise).

(ψ 80[81]:7[8]) אֶעֱנֶה בְּסֵתֶר רָעַם = I will answer thee in the secret place of glory.

(Job 26:14) וְיִרְעֶם גְּבוּרָתוֹ מִי יִתְבּוֹנֶן = But who can understand the glory of his mighty deeds.

(II Sam. 22:14) מֶן שָׁמַיִם ה' יִרְעֶם = The Lord shows his glory from heaven.

(Job 37:4) יִרְעֶם בְּקוֹל גְּאוֹנוֹ = He glories (or exults) with the voice of his majesty.

The difficulties connected with the other translations of these passages have already been pointed out and it will readily be seen how the signification of *glory* embodied in the new rendering given here removes them all.

וַיִּרְעֶם בְּשָׁמַיִם ה' וְעֲלִיּוֹן יִתֵּן קוֹלוֹ (ψ 18:14) presents the same difficulty as II Sam. 22:14 (mentioned above), but if it is rendered: "And the Lord gloried in heaven, And the Most High uttered his voice," not only is the difficulty removed but verse 14 becomes at once parallel to verse 13, the first line corresponding to "at the *brightness* before him."

I Sam. 2:10 עָלָו בְּשָׁמַיִם יִרְעֶם may also belong to this class:

The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken,  
In the heavens shall be *glory* over them,  
The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth,  
And he shall give strength unto his king.

Although "thunder" in place of "glory" does not spoil the sense much, it necessitates a change from בְּשָׁמַיִם (in the heaven) to מִשְׁמַיִם (A.V. "out of heaven"). The LXX contains after κύριος ἀνέβη εἰς οὐρανὸν ("the

Lord has gone up to heaven") *καὶ ἐβρόντησεν* ("and thundered"). This suggests a reading *עָלָה שָׁמַיִם יְיָרֵעַם* instead of the M.T. reading just quoted. But since the LXX here differs from the Hebrew text it can throw no light on the meaning of the M.T. reading of the passage and does not enter into our discussion.

To this class belongs *רַעְמָה*. The mane is so called because it symbolizes the glory of the animal. Cf. *קֶרֶן* (horn) which symbolizes *strength, dignity* (I Sam. 1:10), also *haughtiness, arrogance*<sup>1</sup> (*ψ* 75:5, 6).

To Class (b) the following passages belong:

*ψ* 29:3 *יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַפָּבוֹד הָרֵעַם* = The God of glory thundereth (A.V.).

Syriac: *ܐܠܗܐ ܡܡܝܠܐ ܢܚܝܠܐ*.

This sentence is almost an explanation of the preceding sentence *קוֹל ה' עַל הַמַּיִם*.<sup>2</sup>

(I Sam. 7:10) *וַיִּרְעַם ה'* = And the Lord thundereth.

Syriac: *ܣܘܚܪ ܡܢ ܡܝܐ*.

(Job 40:9[8]) *וַיִּקְוֶל ܦְמֹהֵי ܬܪܝܥܐܡ* = Canst thou thunder with a voice like him?

Syriac: *ܣܘܚܪ ܐܢܐ ܥܡܠܐ ܐܡܠܐ*.

(Job 37:5) *ܐܠ ܝܪܥܐܡ* = God shall thunder (*ܐܠܗܐ*).

(*ψ* 77:19) *קוֹל רַעְמָה* = the voice of thy thunder.

(*ψ* 104:7) *מִן קוֹל רַעְמָה* = at the voice of thy thunder.

To Class (c) belongs, according to the Peshitta, *יְיָרֵעַם הַיָּם* in *ψ* 98:7 which is rendered *ܡܢ ܢܝܣܐ* (*ܢܝܣܐ* from *ܢܝܝܐ* = to be in motion).

*ܒܪܥܐܡ ܝܒܪܥܐܡ* (Isa. 29:6) may be classed either under Class (b) or Class (c). But it should be noted that at the time when this verse was rendered into the Syriac of the Peshitta the meanings of *רַעַם* given under Classes (b) and (c) have become almost synonymous, so that *רַעַם* and *רַעַשׁ* were interchanged. This is probably the explanation why the Syriac renders these two words by *ܡܢ ܢܝܣܐ* as if *ܢܝܣܐ* = *ܪַעַם* and *ܪַעַשׁ* = *ܢܝܣܐ*!

*ܪַעַם ܫܝܪܝܡ* in Job 39:25 should, according to the Peshitta, be classed under (c), *ܡܢ ܢܝܣܐ ܕܡܝܐ*. The LXX, *ὄν αλματι καὶ κρουγῇ*, assumes here a different reading.

Of Class (d) only one instance is found in the O.T., viz., I Sam. 1:6: *וַיַּעַשׂ ܕܗܪܥܝܡܐ* = "to make her fret" (A.V.), Syriac: *ܡܢ ܢܝܣܐ ܕܡܝܐ*. The LXX has here also quite a different reading and need not, therefore, be considered here.

<sup>1</sup> Vid. Gesenius, *Oxford Hebrew Lexicon*, s.v. *קֶרֶן*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Hastings' Dic. of the Bible*, p. 757: "In the O.T. thunder is both poetically described and popularly regarded as the voice of God."

We are now left with only one more verb of the root of רָעַם preserved in our M.T., viz., Ezek. 27:35, רָעַמָּה פָּנִים. This would not easily stand classification under any of the classes described. But as both the Peshitta ܪܥܡܬܐ and the LXX, καὶ ἰδάκρυσε τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ, differ from M.T. by reading רָעַמָּה instead of רָעַמָּה most scholars would probably prefer an emendation. Rothstein, in fact, suggests in Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica* (1906) חָרַר for רָעַמָּה. If רָעַמָּה must be retained it should be classed under (c).

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